

May 20, 2016

Dear Representative:

We are writing on behalf of unions representing more than 50,000 people in Puerto Rico to express our opposition to H.R. 5278, the “Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stabilization Act” or “PROMESA.”

The people of Puerto Rico face an urgent humanitarian and fiscal crisis brought on by more than a decade of recession, excessive debt, and Wall Street demands for austerity. Congress must act immediately to provide a path for comprehensive debt restructuring and a return to sustainable economic growth for the 3.5 million U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico. H.R. 5278 provides no economic stimulus, and in fact takes money out of the economy by reducing the minimum wage and overtime protections.

Any restructuring package must also protect the accrued pension benefits of Puerto Rican workers and retirees, retain worker protections that apply to all working people in the U.S. including minimum wage and overtime protections, and preserve the democratic rights of the people of Puerto Rico. PROMESA is unacceptable because the bill fails to meet these basic goals.

We urge you to OPPOSE H.R. 5278 as currently written. Congress must, however, get back to work immediately to provide real solutions that allow Puerto Rico to negotiate a feasible debt restructuring plan, protects Puerto Rican workers and retirees, and provides economic stimulus so that the territory may achieve economic growth.

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM)

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers
of America International Union (UAW)

United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial
and Service Workers International Union (USW)